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Agenda item 8
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-sixth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2008-2009

(Item 3 (b))

Programme 16
Economic development in Europe

1. At its 12th meeting, on 23 August 2006, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 16, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed biennial programme plan (A/61/6 (Prog. 16)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Support was expressed for the programme. The support provided to countries in the region with economies in transition, as well as the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, were noted with appreciation. In this context, it was emphasized that the strategy of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) should further the strengthening of the national capacity of the countries with economies in transition and the outreach towards the business and non-governmental organization communities in those countries.

4. The view was expressed that the regional commissions were important instruments entrusted with tasks related to development in their respective regions. The view was also expressed that the need for regional commissions remained great

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and that the commissions had demonstrated the ability to adapt to ever-changing circumstances while carrying out the important task of implementing the Millennium Development Goals across a vast geographical area.

5. Appreciation was also expressed for the reform carried out by ECE in 2005, based on recommendations on the role, mandate and functions of the Commission reflected in a report on the state of ECE, which had placed ECE on a new level. The reform was welcomed, particularly given the emphasis it placed on better interaction and interface with other international organizations active in the region. It was pointed out that the ECE reform was regarded as part of the overall reform of the United Nations. Support was also expressed for the changes made in the governance structure of ECE. The need to further strengthen accountability and transparency within ECE was recognized and, in this connection, the establishment of a Programme Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit within the Office of the Executive Secretary was welcomed.

6. The view was also expressed that the strategy of subprogramme 1, Environment, should include a reference to cooperation with other entities, such as the United Nations Environment Programme and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

7. Appreciation was expressed for the availability of macroeconomic, social and demographic statistics collected and distributed to countries of the region. Furthermore, the strategy of the programme to provide public access to all meeting documents, work programmes and statistical standards and recommendations to provide the basis for transparency and accountability was commended.

8. The establishment of subprogramme 4, Economic cooperation and integration, was welcomed. It was pointed out that the subprogramme was designed to provide much-needed financial assistance to countries with economies in transition. The view was further expressed that it would be relevant to have an indicator of achievement related to the number of countries expressing satisfaction with the advice rendered.

9. The view was expressed that for subprogramme 5, Sustainable energy, more prominence should have been given to furthering participation of all relevant stakeholders.

10. The need to continue to ensure international regional cooperation as part of the strategy of subprogramme 7, Timber and forestry, was emphasized.

11. The view was expressed concerning subprogramme 8, Housing, land management and population, that strengthening the local capacity was essential in developing housing and urban governance. The view was also expressed that consideration should be given to including the issue of migration in the activities of the subprogramme.

12. The view was expressed that ECE currently had no standardized evaluation system in place for its subprogrammes, and it was requested that an evaluation mechanism be implemented and streamlined across all subprogrammes.

13. The representative of the Secretary-General, in his response to the comments made by the Committee, indicated that the evaluation of all subprogrammes was currently conducted according to instructions and guidelines provided by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and that ECE was in the process of issuing an

evaluation guide in response to a decision of the Commission to have biennial evaluations conducted by all ECE sectoral committees.

Conclusions and recommendations

14. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the narrative of programme 16, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed biennial programme plan, subject to the following modifications:**

Subprogramme 1
Environment

Indicators of achievement

To indicator (a), add new indicator (iii) reading: "(iii) Increased number of actions taken in order to promote public access to environmental information".

Subprogramme 4
Economic cooperation and integration

Indicators of achievement

To indicators (a) and (c) (i), delete the word "increased" at the beginning of the indicator.

Renumber indicator (a) as (a) (i) and add a new indicator (a) (ii) reading: "(ii) Number of countries indicating satisfaction with training events".

15. **The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly approve the proposed revisions to programme 16, Economic development in Europe, of the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007 (see A/61/125).**